

	<p>Illinois Small Business Development Center Network</p> <h1>WEEKLY CONNECTION</h1> <p>Entrepreneurship ~ Innovation ~ Technology</p>	
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*Providing Professional Guidance for Business Growth*

## August 31, 2015

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### Spotlight on Success – Rubino Engineering

Michelle Lipinski was a newly licensed Civil Engineer when her firm decided to close her office. Ms. Lipinski saw an opportunity and in 2009 opened her own firm, Rubino Engineering, to fill the void. Rubino was profitable in the first year and has grown steadily ever since. She has upgraded her equipment and recently hired a geologist and full-time lab technician to complement the Rubino team.

Her latest success is winning the **Illinois Small Business Development Center at Elgin Community College (ECC)** Small Business Plan Competition sponsored by American Chartered Bank. After learning



Michelle Lipinski and Sybil Ege

about the competition Ms. Lipinski said, "I was slightly intimidated, but knew I needed to pursue it for the good of my business. After the competition was launched, I set up a meeting with Sybil Ege of the Small Business Development Center at ECC. Although Sybil structured the competition outline so that it was very easy to follow, talking through the process with her gave me the confidence I needed to start putting it together."

She admitted to not having any detailed plans in place, "I have been in business for almost 6 years, and hadn't yet put a business plan on paper mainly because I had no format, no structure, and no mentor.

This business plan competition provided me with the tools I needed to think through our existing growth as well as our growth potential. It was very rewarding to see the correlations between our growth and the decisions I was making, and then

use those correlations to develop my business plan.

As winner, Ms. Lipinski has earned the services of a business consultant. She is now working with both Sybil and the consultant to determine how to keep her business growing and profitable.

"I am so honored to have won the award," she said, "and I want to thank **Sybil Ege with the SBDC at ECC** and Chris Sobey with American Chartered Bank for their help and support along the way. Not only will the award money help me with my business plan, but I am very anxious to start the business consulting engagement offered through the Fox Valley Entrepreneurship Center (FVEC). I plan on enrolling in many of the business courses that ECC offers and will utilize the SBDC going forward as my business mentor." Learn more about Rubino Engineering at: <http://www.rubinoeng.com/>

### **SBDC's In The News – Illinois SBDC at MCC Receives Donation**

The Northwest Herald recently posted a story about the Illinois Small Business Development Center at McHenry County College receiving a \$10,000 donation from Castle Bank. You can find the full story [HERE](#).

A recent \$10,000 donation to the Friends of McHenry County College Foundation will go toward the Illinois Small Business Development Center located at the college's Shah Center. Castle Bank made the donation to support the center's services for area small businesses, start-ups and entrepreneurs, according to MCC. Melissa Stocker, business banker at Castle Bank, met with Kristi Patterson, the small business development center's manager, and others from MCC to deliver the \$10,000 check.

The small business development center at the Shah Center provides training and assistance to more than 600 area businesses and nearly 9,000 individuals each year, according to its website. The center offers one-on-one counseling for entrepreneurs, on-site employee training seminars and various other business services. For more information, contact the small business development center at 815-455-6098.

Congratulations to Kristi and her SBDC team at McHenry County College ! !

### **Maximizing Neoserra – Sending Separate Emails To Clients Using the BCC Field**

If you are using the Neoserra email capabilities then each and every recipient will always receive a private, personal email that does not include the email addresses of any other recipient!

When emailing from Neoserra, you do not need to put the email addresses of your clients in the BCC line because Neoserra will never show more than one email address in the "To" field. This is one of the best features of the Neoserra emailing system because it preserves the privacy of your clients while ensuring the highest probability of delivery. Often spam filters will trap emails that lump multiple email addresses in the BCC field. Neoserra avoids this problem by sending out separate email messages to each recipient.

This also allows you to take advantage of [substitution variables](#) in your email messages. If you do put your email address in the CC or BCC field of an email message generated in Neoserra, then Neoserra assumes that you won't want to get a copy of every email message sent. Instead, it will only send you a copy of the first email that goes out. This is to prevent you from receiving hundreds of unwanted emails. If you do want a copy of every single email that is sent, then be sure to click the "Send a copy of each delivery to myself?" checkbox at the bottom of the screen.

See more at: <https://support.outreachsystems.com/resources/help/neoserra/faq.jsp?id=n250>

### **Valued Resources – Retail Customer Experience Blog**

#### **Retail Customer Experience Blog**

Ever wanted expert and hands on advice from a wide array of trusted sources? Then this should be your go to source. With more than 50+ retail experts sharing their insights and domain knowledge for the everyday retailer, it doesn't get much better if you're looking to change the way you operate your business or are looking to turn it around for increased sales and growth. Learn more at: <http://www.retailcustomerexperience.com/blogs/>

### **Microsoft Community Connections**

Please see the note below from Maggie Bond with Microsoft Community Connections about the opportunity to receive complementary gifts which you can award at your technology related training programs. Check it out.

Hello Rod,

I am sending this email to introduce a complimentary program. Anytime your Organization has an event or meeting with a Technology topic it can be registered on our website and we send free software to raffle off. [Microsoft Community Connections Program](#). Keep in mind any events that are Technology can be registered. If you need help with finding a presenter we can try to find you a Microsoft Partner to help.

The [Microsoft Community Connections](#) program is a complementary, completely cost free program that brings together local business organizations with Microsoft technology partners to deliver events and activities. These events help educate small businesses to make informed technology decisions, by providing relevant, educational ready-to-go event materials, including rich content for SMB Businesses. We help make hosting these events easy! Please visit the [MCC Site](#) for additional information and resources available.

In addition, we recently announced the ***MCC Simple Tech Tips Program!*** Then, if you are interested in utilizing [MCC Simple Tech tips](#) all you have to do is [sign up](#) to start receiving the content on a bimonthly basis for your newsletters, blogs, etc... Please let me know if you have any questions or if I can be of further assistance.

Best Regards,  
Maggie

Maggie Bond | Tele-Business Development Manager  
[Microsoft Community Connections](#) (MCC) | 888-834-8564 ext 1597 - [v-margwi@microsoft.com](mailto:v-margwi@microsoft.com)  
Hours 5:30 am to 2:00 pm PST - To learn more about MCC, click [here](#) to watch a short video

### **Illinois SBDC and Illinois PTAC RFAs**

The Request for Applications for the Illinois SBDCs-ITCs and Illinois PTACs have been released. By September 1, 2015 the 2016 Illinois SBDC RFA will also be posted on the Illinois SBDC webpage at [www.ilsbdc.biz](http://www.ilsbdc.biz) and the Illinois PTAC RFA will be available on the Illinois PTAC webpage at [Illinois PTAC RFA](#). Please contact Rod Hollenstine or Tom Becker if you have any questions.

### **Network News and Moves – Welcome Molly Banuelos and Karen Goldner**

**Molly Banuelos Joins ICNC** - Molly Banuelos is the new Director of the Illinois SBDC International Trade Center at ICNC where she provides customized business, research, and technical assistance to Illinois-based companies interested in first-time exporting or growing their international sales. Since 2008 Molly has been working in international trade and investment promotion in Chicago, first with the Invest in France Agency promoting U.S. business expansion into France, and then with the Canadian Consulate, managing the province of Alberta's trade office activities for the greater Midwest. Prior experience includes working for Target Corporation in Minneapolis, teaching English in France, and interning with the Foreign Commercial Service in France. Molly graduated from Indiana University with a B.S. in International Business and French. She resides in Humboldt Park with her husband and enjoys traveling, reading, yoga, and soccer.

**Karen Goldner Joins WBDC** - Karen Goldner is the new Director of the Illinois SBDC at the WBDC and Associate Director of Entrepreneurial Services at the WBDC. She provides business advice and instruction to startup businesses, and works with both new and existing businesses in the WBDC's Access to Capital program. Her passion is helping entrepreneurs reach their dreams. Karen Goldner has spent twenty years working with, in, and for, small businesses. She worked with for-profit and non-profit early stage investment organizations, including creating and managing the first for-profit technology-focused angel fund in Northeast Indiana. Karen served as Interim President of a \$6 million defense manufacturer owned by her investors. Prior to that, she managed a community development loan program for the City of Fort Wayne, and served as Fort Wayne's Director of Economic Development. Karen earned her Master of Public Affairs from Indiana University's School of Public and Environmental Affairs, and her Bachelor of Arts at the University of Nebraska.

Please join us in giving Molly and Karen a HUGE WELCOME to the Illinois SBDC Network !!!

### **America's SBDC Network Connect**

Please [CLICK HERE](#) to access the latest issue of [America's SBDC Network Connect Newsletter](#). In this edition you will find information about the upcoming America's SBDCs Annual Conference, "Gateway to Small Business Success" including an article about Discussion Forums – "Hidden Gems of the ASBDC Conference". Check it out!

### **SBA Recognizes America's SBDCs 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

SBA recently recognized the America's SBDCs are 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary by sending out the announcement shown below as the lead in its latest news update. The announcement also included a link to a very good article about America's SBDCs. You can learn more and see the entire article [by clicking on SBA's Blog](#).



America's SBDCs are celebrating 35 years. Learn more about what SBDCs can do for your small business. [>>Read More](#)

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The **WEEKLY CONNECTION** is distributed by the Illinois SBDC and Illinois Department of Commerce Office of Entrepreneurship, Innovation & Technology each Monday to members of the Illinois SBDC Network to provide our service delivery partners with current updates on small business issues, opportunities and resources. Please send information to share with the Illinois SBDC Network to [Tom.Becker@illinois.gov](mailto:Tom.Becker@illinois.gov). Please feel free to forward this update to any other interested resource providers and key stakeholders.

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